cal units, in the concern of Ministry of Industry and as per available information, a proposal to increase the investment limit for small scale sector is under consideration of the Government to meet the requirements of quality and technology amongst others, for small scale units.

Strike by the workers of Rashtriya Chemicals & Fertilizers Limited

337. SHRI JIBON ROY:
SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there was a strike for 72 hours by the workmen of Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers Ltd. (RCF);

(b) if so, the issue leading to the strike;

(c) whether the unions have now informed about an indefinite strike, if the issues are not resolved;

(d) if so, the action being taken by Government to avert the strike;

(e) whether the workers of National Fertiolizers Limited also have given a notice of an indefinite strike from 27th November, 1997; and

(f) if so, the action taken by Government so far to avert the strike?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The workers of Rashtriya Chemicals & Fertilizers Limited (RCF) went on 72 hours strike from 6.00 a.m. on 22nd October, 1997 to press their demand for payment of Bonus and incentive including ex gratia amount for the year 1996-97 over and above their entitlement as per the Government guidelines.

(c) and (d) The unions have not given any notice yet to go on indefinite strike. The management of RCF is making efforts to resolve the issue through dialogue with the representatives of the recognised union.

(e) and (f) Yes Sir. The recognised unions of various units of NFL including the Corporate Office have served notices for indefinite strike from 27.11.1997 to press decision on their charter of demands. The management had dialogue with the unions and this is still continuing at various levels. Simultaneously, conciliation proceedings have also been started by Regional Labour Commissioner (Central) at Chandigarh for the Panipat unit of NFL. Contingency plans are being made ready for running the plants in case no settlement is possible before 27.11.1997.

Revival proposal for Indian Drugs & Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

338. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Group of Ministers have approved any revival proposal for Indian Drugs & Pharmaceuticals Ltd. (IDPL);

(b) if so, the salient features of the acheis viz. reliefs and concessions agreed by Government, State Governments, FIs/ Banks and sacrifices envisaged from the workers; and

(c) if not, the present status of revival scheme for IDPL and the likely timeframe anvisegee for finalisation of reveival scheme?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (c) On the basis of the outlines of revival proposal submitted by IDPL management and the employees, a Group of Ministers (GOA) in a meeting held on 8.8.97 recommended revival of IDPL and decided that IDPL management should be directed to rework, in close coordinated on with the represantetives of the employees of the company, a rehabilitetion proposal on given parameters. Such a proposal, prepered by IDPL management in consultation with the representatives of the

workers/
employees has been suibmitted to the Government in the last week of October, 1997. A view of the Government on this proposal is likely to be taken by 31.12.1997. The final approval of the rehabilitation package will, however, depend upon the deliberations before the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR), the prescribed authority under the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, 1985.

Impact of Hike in the Prices of Natural Gas on the Fertilizer Sector

339. SHRI GAYA SINGH:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the impact of the recent hike in prices of Natural Gas on the fertilizer sector; and

(b) how Government plans to neutralise the cost of production of fertilizers?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b) On the basis of the production levels of 1996-97, the likely impact on the subsidy outgo under the Retention Price Scheme of the increase in the price of natural gas with effect from 1.10.97 has provisionally been estimated at Rs. 298 crore per annum. An adhoc increase in the Retention Prices of the gas based urea units w.e.f. 1.10.97 has been notified on 13.11.97.

Proposal for fresh rehabilitation of IDPL

340. SHRI MD. SALIM:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have asked the IDPL management and unions to submit a fresh rehabilitation proposal within certain parameters;

(b) whether the paremeters include extension of purchase preferencu from Government Institutions, if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have stipulated that IDPL should operate as a joint venture between the management, staff and the workers, if so, the role of the Government in such a venture; and

(d) whether the management and unions have submitted a fresh scheme in response to (a), if so, the present status of the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir. The Government has inoicated that purchase preference with a price preference of 10% over the last purchase price could be extended for 50% of the production of IDPL from the Central Government Ministries/Departments.

(c) Yes, Sir. The Government would continue to be the owners of the company.

(d) Yes, Sir. IDPL management has submitted the revised proposal in the last week of October, 1997 which is under consideration of the Government. The final approval of the rehabilitation package will, hoiwever, depend upon the deliberations before the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR), the prescribed authority under the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, 1985 (SICA).

HFC and FCI referred to BIFR

341. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY:
SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
SHRI MD. SALIM:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation (HFC) and Fertilizer Corpora-